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Keith Miller, Governor

1829 Tongass Avenue  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

February 17, 1969

Philip W. Gum, Act. Dist. Ranger  
S. Tongass National Forest, Kasaaan Dist.  
110 Marine View Apts.  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Dear Phil:

Your request for information on Karta River Drainage has been referred to me for data on the sport fishing there. Listed here then is what I have on it.

Karta River has a relatively wide bed for the greater part of its length and a mean flow 444 c.f.s. There are two lakes in series in the drainage of 282 and 1384 surface acres respectively lying at elevations 4 ft. a part of 104 ft. and 108 ft., the smaller being the lower.

There is an excellent sport fish habitat here. Species of fish entering the sport catch are rainbow, steelhead, cutthroat, and dolly varden trout as well as coho, pink, chum and sockeye salmon. Excellent spawning grounds for these species are available throughout the system. They are in the main river and the streams tributary to it and the lakes.

A falls which is a partial fish barrier exists between the lower lake and tidewater some 1/2 mile below the lake spill. This falls denies the lakes to the pink and chum salmon but all other species ascend it. Barriers to fish exist in the tributary streams above excellent spawning gravels where the valley bottoms increase to grades.

The numbers of fish in the system upon which the sport fishery flourishes are considerable. No wrier to establish an actual count has ever been operated. A fair minimal estimate of the present runs would be 2,000 steelhead, 150,000 dolly varden, 5,000 coho salmon, 35,000 pink salmon, 10,000 sockeye salmon and 25,000 chum salmon. The resident rainbow and cutthroat trout are climax for the system - all it will support.

Potential production of the system is much higher than now. However, it is possible that these great runs of former years can be restored.

Philip W. Cam

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Karta River is one of the best known steelhead streams in Southeast Alaska. Anglers from all over the United States come to fish for these grand trout. The summer fishery on resident trout and migratory fish is without equal. The coho fishery is excellent and defies adequate description.

It is the recommendation of the Sport Fish Section of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game that no land use activity take place in the Karta River Drainage that will in any way impair, destroy or destructively alter realistically or aesthetically the sport fishery of this drainage.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Baade  
Sport Fish Biologist

RFB/md